

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MADRID 9549

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SP
SUBJECT: GOS OFFICIAL LOOKS AHEAD

REF: MADRID 9462

1. A SUB-CABINET OFFICIAL, WHO WORKS FOR SUAREZ ON THE
POLITICAL REFORM, TALKED AT LENGTH WITH EMBOFF REFERENDUM
AFTERNOON (REF). BY THE TIME THEY TALKED IT WAS CLEAR
THAT THE PARTICIPATION LEVELS WOULD BE HIGH ENOUGH TO
ASSURE THE GOS THE MANDATE IT SOUGHT, (HE DID NOT FORE-
SEE ANYTHING LIKE THE 94PERCENT "YES" VOTE), AND THE CONVERS-
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TION LOOKED AHEAD AT THE TASKS OF SETTING UP THE RULES
OF THE GAME FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS AND THE
PROCESS OF POLITICAL COALITION BUILDING.

2. THE ELECTORAL LAW OR THE RULES OF THE GAME: THE NEXT
TASK FOR THE GOVERNMENT WAS TO NEGOTIATE--WITH EVERY-

BODY, THE TRADITIONAL OPPOSITION, THE ALIANZA POPULAR AND ALL RESPECTABLE INTERESTED PARTIES TO THE ELECTION. EXACTLY WHAT SHAPE THE ELECTORAL LAW WOULD TAKE WOULD DEPEND ON THE OUTCOME OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS. HE ASSENTED TO THE PROPOSITION THAT THE GOS WOULD TRY TO BALANCE CONFLICTING VIEWS FROM THE POLITICAL ACTORS IN A FASHION THAT PRODUCED AN ELECTORAL SET-UP THAT MET GOS CRITERIA.

--WITH RESPECT TO THE KEY QUESTION OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR A MINIMUM NUMBER OF SEATS FOR EACH PROVINCE IN THE LOWER HOUSE, IT WAS NECESSARY NOT TO ESTABLISH THIS MINIMUM AT A LEVEL THAT SIGNIFICANTLY DISTORTED THE "ONE MAN ONE VOTE" PRINCIPLE. HE SAW TWO POSSIBLE FORMULAE: THE ALLOCATION OF A MINIMUM NUMBER OF TWO SEATS PLUS AN EXTRA SEAT PER UNIT OF POPULATION (IN EFFECT A MINIMUM NUMBER OF THREE SEATS) OR A TWO-SEAT MINIMUM FOR THE TWO PROVINCES BELOW 100,00 VOTER (SORIA AND GUADALAJARA) (SEGOVIA IS MARGINALLY UNDER) WITH PROVINCES ABOVE THIS LIMIT GETTING A MINIMUM OF THREE SEATS. THIS LAST FORMULA HAD MERIT IN THAT IT WOULD NOT GRANT TWO TINY PROVINCES TOO DISPROPORTIONATE A NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES.

--RE THE QUESTION OF THE MINIMUM PERCENTAGE REQUIRED OF A POLITICAL PARTY TO OBTAIN SEATS IN THE LOWER HOUSE, THE ONLY REAL PROBLEM LAY IN WHAT TO DO ABOUT PARTIES WHICH ARE STRONG IN CATALUNYA OR THE BASQUE COUNTRY BUT HAVE NO NATIONAL FOLLOWING. ONE SOLUTION WOULD BE TO MAINTAIN A NATIONAL FLOOR AND ENCOURAGE REGIONAL PARTIES TO AFFILIATE LOOSELY WITH NATIONAL GROUPS FOR ELECTORAL PURPOSES. THE REGIONAL CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WERE ALREADY AFFILIATED WITH THE CONFIDENTIAL

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"CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT TEAM." BUT THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE RELUCTANCE IN CATALUNYA TO AFFILIATE WITH ANYONE NATIONALLY. ANOTHER SOLUTION MIGHT BE THE REQUIREMENT THAT A PARTY GAIN A MINIMUM PERCENTAGE IN THREE PROVINCES (WHAT IS CALLED HERE "THE LINZ FORMULA").

3. THE FORMATION OF THE CENTER: HE DID NOT SHARE THE OPTIMISM OF SOME GOS OFFICIALS WITH WHOM THIS MISSION HAS TALKED THAT A BROAD SINGLE CENTRIST FRONT COULD BE EASILY FORMED BETWEEN THE ALIANZA POPULAR TO THE RIGHT AND THE PSOE TO THE LEFT. HE THOUGHT SUCH AN OVERALL CENTRIST ALLIANCE A DESIRABLE GOAL AND ONE THAT HAD SOME CHANCE OF BEING REACHED. BUT HE THOUGHT MORE LIKELY TWO CENTRIST ELECTORAL ALLIANCES--ONE OF THE CENTER RIGHT WITH PARTIDO POPULAR AND PERHAPS THE NEW GROUPING THAT IS BEING FORMED BY THE LEFT WING OF FRANCOISM UNDER THE AUSPICES OF INTERIOR MINISTER MARTIN VILLA, PLUS PERHAPS SOME LIBERALS. THE OTHER WOULD BE A CENTER

LEFT ALLIANCE OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (RUIZ GIMENEZ ET AL)
AND INCLUDING SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND SOME LIBERALS. BOTH
GROUPS WOULD SUPPORT THE RETENTION OF SUAREZ IN THE
PRIME MINISTER SHIP BUT HE DID NOT THINK IT LIKELY THEY COULD
GET TOGETHER ON A SINGLE ALLIANCE.

--HE THOUGHT THE MARTIN VILLA BACKED GROUPING
PROBABLY WOULD BE CALLED THE ALIANZA INDEPENDIENTE AND WOULD
FACE SEVERAL CHOICES DEPENDING ON HOW THE POLITICAL SITUA-
TION WENT. THEY MIGHT LINE UP WITH THE PARTIDO POPULAR
OR THEY MIGHT EVEN LINE UP WITH FRAGA'S ALIANZA POPULAR.
IN ANY EVENT, IN SOME SENSE, THEY WOULD BE A VEHICLE
FOR ADOLFO SUAREZ AFTER THE ELECTIONS.

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4. THE PCE AND THE ELECTIONS: THE GOVERNMENT MAINTAINED
ITS POSTURE OF NOT LEGALIZING THE PCE BEFORE THE ELECTIONS.
HE THOUGHT THIS WAS THE PROPER POSTURE FOR THE TIME BEING
GIVEN CONTINUED MILITARY RELUCTANCE. NONETHELESS EVENTS
HAVE MOVED FAST IN SPAIN AND ATTITUDES HAD CHANGED MORE
QUICKLY THAN FORESEEN ON OTHER ISSUES. IT WAS ENTIRELY

POSSIBLE THAT BY THE TIME OF THE ELECTIONS THE GOS MIGHT BE IN A POSITION TO LEGALIZE THE COMMUNIST PARTY. MORE LIKELY, HE THOUGHT, AS THINGS STOOD NOW THE ELECTORAL LAW WOULD PROVIDE A PLACE FOR AN "INDEPENDENT GROUP" THAT WOULD INCLUDE ASSORTED LEFTIST INDEPENDENTS (E.G. GARCIA TREVIJANO) PLUS PCE TYPES RUNNING AS INDEPENDENTS. ANOTHER FORMULA MIGHT BE FOR THE PCE
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TO SLIP SOME OF ITS CANDIDATES IN ON ONE OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY LISTS (PSP OR PSOE). THE PSOE HAD SHOWN CONSIDERABLE ASTUTENESS IN WANTING TO KEEP ITS DISTANCE ELECTORALLY FROM THE COMMUNISTS AND WOULD PROBABLY CONTINUE TO DO SO. THE PSP LEADERSHIP (TIERNO GALVAN) ALSO DID NOT WANT COMMUNISTS ON THEIR TICKET, BUT AT THE SAME TIME THEIR VERY SMALL VOTING BASE MIGHT MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE PSP TO WIN SEATS UNLESS IT ADMITTED COMMUNISTS.

--SANTIAGO CARRILLO HAD MADE A GREAT MISTAKE IN COMING OUT IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE. THOUGH THE PCE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE ORIOL KIDNAPPING, CARRILLO SHOULD HAVE FORESEEN THAT SOMETHING LIKE THE KIDNAPPING HAD SOME PROBABILITY OF OCCURRENCE IN THE TENSE PRE-REFERENDUM PERIOD. HIS APPEARANCE WOULD BE LINKED IN CONSERVATIVE EYES WITH THE TERRORIST ACTION. CARRILLO SHOWED BAD JUDGMENT. HIS APPEARANCE SERVED TO ILLUSTRATE THE POINT THAT CARRILLO MIGHT CEASE TO BE A MYTH IF HE WERE ALLOWED TO GO PUBLIC AND PUT HIS FOOT IN HIS MOUTH FROM TIME TO TIME.

5. THE PSOE: OUR INTERLOCUTOR, WHO KNOWS THE PSOE LEADERSHIP WELL, THOUGHT THE LAST DAY OF THE PSOE CONGRESS A DREADFUL SHOW, WHICH HURT THE PSOE'S IMAGE IN SPAIN. NONETHELESS HE WAS SURE THE PSOE LEADERSHIP HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE REPUBLICAN DEMONSTRATION, WAS CLEARLY EMBARRASSED BY IT, AND HAD SOUGHT TO EXPLAIN IT AWAY IN FELIPE GONZALEZ'S SUBSEQUENT REMARKS. HE FELT THAT GONZALEZ, ARMED WITH A MANDATE FROM THE CONGRESS, WOULD NOW MOVE AWAY FROM THE MOST RADICAL POSTURES. IN THE PAST THE PSOE, AFTER ALL, HAD FOLLOWED A ZIG-ZAG COURSE (WHICH COST IT IN PUBLIC CREDIBILITY), BY BALANCING MOVES LEFTWARD BY MOVES RIGHTWARD AND VICE VERSA (E.G. THE PSOE'S VERY SALUTARY DESTRUCTION OF GARCIA TREVIJANO AS A CREDIBLE POLITICAL FIGURE WAS FOLLOWED BY CLOSER COLLABORATION WITH THE PCE).
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6. THE OFFICIAL HAD WORKED FOR FRAGA AND RESPECTED HIS INTEGRITY AND PATRIOTISM, BUT FELT HE HAD BEEN TOO IMPETUOUS IN PUTTING TOGETHER THE ALIANZA POPULAR. FRAGA WAS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ALL THE REST OF THEM PUT TOGETHER AND HAD HURT HIMSELF BY JOINING WITH FIGURES WHOSE REPUTATIONS WERE SO LINKED TO THE FRANCO ERA. HE THOUGHT FRAGA WOULD TRY TO IMPROVE THE AP'S IMAGE BY SEEKING SOME DEGREE OF ACCOMMODATION WITH THE PEOPLE AROUND MARTIN BILLA, BUT IT REMAINED TO BE SEEN JUST HOW THIS WOULD COME OUT. STABLER

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